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MONTANA LABOR MARKET

Monthly Review of
EMPLOYMENT OUTLOOK, LABOR SUPPLY, LABOR DEMAND, CURRENT EMPLOYMENT
MONTANA STATE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE
Division of Unemployment Compensation Commission of Montana
Edgar H. Reeder, Chairman
James J. Flaherty, Commissioner UCC Building—P.O. Box 1728—Helena, Montana Fredric D. Moulton, Commissioner

FL. 281 HELENA INDEPENDENT-RECORD HELENA, MONTANA 1 MARCH, 1968

Spring Job Upturn Now in Progress Waits for the Copper Industry to Join the Employment Picture

1968 Starts With High Job Levels—Although the Montana copper strike carried over into 1968, employment in non-farm industries was at record levels for both January and February of this year. There were 181,000 wage earners on industrial payrolls for each of these two months this year. These were the highest winter non-farm job totals ever achieved in Montana. February non-farm employment this year was 2,500 above the February, 1967 total. This accomplishment, in the face of the lengthy copper strike, points up job growth in other Montana industries.

Job Totals Up In Six Major Industries—Six of the eight basic industry groups had more workers on their payrolls this February than the same month last year. Government employment, up 4,800, led the list with job gains of 4,600 at state and local units and 200 at the federal level. Construction was next with a gain of 1,500 workers for a February job total of 8,900. Moderate weather allowed work to continue on many outdoor projects and even permitted some new starts during the month. The fast growing trade industry chalked up a gain of 1,200 workers from February last year. The service industries showed good strength with a job gain of 500. Workers hired to assist with income tax work were partially responsible for the 300 more workers on payrolls of finance, insurance, and real estate firms this February. Transportation, communications, and utility firms had 200 more workers this February than last.

Mining and Manufacturing Account For Only Declines—Reflecting the effects of the copper strike these two industries were short 6,000 workers from year ago job figures. The mining group showed the biggest decline with a 3,800 worker loss. The employment drop in manufacturing was 2,200. The table on page 3 of this publication shows employment for the various classifications in these two groups.

1967 Average Employment Highest On Record—When the copper strike began on July 15, 1967, non-farm employment in Montana had climbed to the record breaking total of 201,400. In fact, monthly non-farm job totals for ten of the twelve months of 1967 exceeded comparable months of all past years. Employment dropped during August and September, recovered in October, and the year ended with an average monthly non-farm employment total of 189,900. This exceeded the 1966 average employment by 3,200 workers, and in a year which carried the burden of 5½ months of the copper strike it still set a record for average yearly employment in non-farm industries.

Back To Work Call Sounded—Workers started returning to jobs in a good array of industries early in March as winter released its grip on the state labor market. Barring unfavorable weather, substantial employment gains in most industry groups should be well underway by April. A good agenda of industrial and agricultural activity is now shaping up. Work is already in progress on some major building and highway projects. More new construction starts will appear as the season advances. Pouring of concrete at Libby Dam is expected early in June. The seasonal openings of national parks, resort areas, and the summer upturn in trade and service volume will create thousands of additional jobs. The excitement of new oil discoveries in southeastern Montana will translate into more jobs in both the oil fields and other industries. The logging industry, now showing the effects of the spring break-up period, should be at full steam by May 1st. There are now signs that the copper industry will soon be back in active labor market status after an absence of nearly 8½ months.

LABOR TURNOVER RATES IN MANUFACTURING AND MINING INDUSTRIES

(per 100 employees)

(Compiled in cooperation with U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics)

INDUSTRY	ACCESSION RATE						SEPARATION RATE								
	Total			New Hire			Total			Quit			Layoff		
	Jan. 1968	Dec. 1967	Jan. 1967	Jan. 1968	Dec. 1967	Jan. 1967	Jan. 1968	Dec. 1967	Jan. 1967	Jan. 1968	Dec. 1967	Jan. 1967	Jan. 1968	Dec. 1967	Jan. 1967
All Manufacturing	2.7	2.8	4.2	2.2	2.7	3.9	3.0	5.6	3.8	1.5	2.0	1.9	.7	3.0	.6
Durable Goods	2.8	2.4	5.2	2.4	2.2	4.8	3.3	6.9	4.4	1.8	2.9	2.1	.5	3.1	.6
Primary Metal	1.8	.3	4.9	1.0	.2	4.2	2.3	2.4	4.7	1.0	.9	2.2	*	.8	*
Nondurable Goods	2.5	3.5	2.1	2.0	3.5	2.0	2.6	3.4	2.5	.9	.3	1.5	1.1	2.7	.6
All Mining	2.9	9.2	6.6	2.2	4.6	3.8	5.9	3.3	11.5	1.9	1.4	2.1	3.1	1.0	6.5
Metal Mining	1.3	1.8	7.5	*	*	3.5	2.7	4.9	6.3	1.2	1.3	2.2	*	1.9	.5

*Less than .05

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Along the Hiring Line—
Field Summary for February

ANACONDA, Deer Lodge, Philipsburg—The community's economic condition worsens as the 8 month old copper strike presses hard on all industry groups. Trade and service volume at low levels with no new hiring; many workers on short work weeks. More idle workers leaving the area as spring season approaches. No hope for any economic upturn until strike is settled.

BILLINGS, Columbus, Hardin, Laurel, Red Lodge, Roundup—Good upswing in construction jobs with the prevalence of mild weather. New projects include addition to junior high school, warehouse, office building, and a feed mill. A $½ million repair project at Yellowtail Dam employs 40 men. Highway construction crews increasing weekly. Trade and service industry jobs holding up well and on par with year ago. Production scheduled to start soon at new carpet factory at Crow Agency with initial work force of 20, but 200 potential jobs seen. Farm labor demand gradually edging upward.

BOZEMAN, Ennis, Three Forks, Trident—Employment holding up well in most industries but no big job upswing expected until spring work season begins in earnest. Construction wintered well; major projects in progress included interstate highway by-pass and $400,000 shopping center. Lumber mill employment up with seasonal reopening of West Yellowstone stud mill. Logging slowed by spring break-up conditions.

BUTTE, Virginia City, Whitehall—The mining city economy continues its suffering as result of the copper strike. Local, state and national meetings of union and management officials show little effort toward settlement. Except for fair activity in construction, job trends in other groups practically nil. Half of trade workers on short work weeks.

CUT BANK—Employment trends in most industry groups were limited throughout February due to unsettled weather. Seasonal hiring upswing in construction, oil fields, trade, and agriculture should start developing in March.

DILLON—Construction job volume holds at good levels despite continuing carpenter strike which affects one major building project. Work soon to start on $750,000 grade school. New tungsten mill expected to be operating by April 1. Farm labor demand picking up with start of lambing and calving activities.

GLASGOW, Fort Peck, Malta, Opheim—Business activity shows some signs of slowdown due to anxiety of air base closure, set for July 1. Main street hiring mainly for replacements. Most construction held in suspension until weather permits full scale operations. Farm labor demand still slow.

GLENDIVE, Circle, Wibaux—Construction shaping up well for a busy season after fairly active work schedule throughout the winter months. Projects include interstate bridge, highway overpasses, community hospital, communications center, and addition to telephone company building. Oil field and service companies maintain steady trends. Main street business yet to recover from winter slowdown.

GREAT FALLS, Choteau, Fort Benton, Stanford—Area economy at good strength despite strike-idled smelter operations, now going into the 9th month. Construction adds more workers weekly as weather moderates. New job activity most prevalent in trade industries during February. Steady farm labor demand will show more activity as spring work season begins in earnest.

HAMILTON, Stevensville—Most industries now showing good spring job uptrends with exception of logging which is stalemated by spring break-up conditions—bad roads and imposed load limits. Good activity in trade and service firms after winter letdown. A slow market reduced potato sorting and shipping operations this year.

HAVRE, Chinook, Harlem—Employment in most industry groups stayed at steady levels throughout the winter. Unemployment claims were below year ago levels. Spring job outlook appears good as more construction opens up, trade and service volume increases, and predicted increase in railroad employment. Farm labor demand increasing with some worker shortages expected in April.

HELENA, Boulder, Garrison, Townsend, White Sulphur Springs—Local economy has not yet shaken off the dullness of the past year. Some gradual improvement, however, now starting to show in construction and trade. Logging and mill operations in area had job increases. Demand for clerical workers on the rise. Fair farm labor demand with adequate supply of workers.

KALISPELL, Columbia Falls, Whitefish—Construction employment exceeded year ago totals by 60% as work continued on area building projects including Libby Dam. Trade and service industries at high volume benefitting from construction payrolls. Lumber mill employment keeps steady but spring break-up conditions cutting into logging jobs. Farm labor demand chiefly for grading and sorting 1967 potato crop.

LEWISTOWN, Harlowton, Ryegate, Winnett—Labor market developments show little change from year ago. Jobs increasing gradually in construction, trade, service, and agriculture as spring work season nears. Some upturn noted in manufacturing employment. Farm labor demand edging upward.

LIBBY—Labor market conditions were on uneven keel because of unsettled weather, some project completions and presence of several short lived labor disputes. Libby Dam work force near the 1,100 mark but no new hiring

MONTANA CIVILIAN WORK FORCE
(In Thousands)

	Feb. 68	Jan. 68	Feb. 67	Jan. 68 to Feb. 68	Feb. 67 to Feb. 68
Civilian Work Force	257.4	258.0	250.2	—0.6	7.2
Total Employment	234.1	234.6	234.6	—0.5	—0.5
Total Non-agricultural Employment	208.6	208.0	207.1	0.6	1.5
(Non-agricultural Wage & Salary)	181.0	181.0	178.5	0.0	—2.5
Total Agriculture Employment	25.5	26.6	27.5	—1.1	—2.0
Labor Management Disputes	7.6	7.6	*	0.0	7.6
Total Unemployment	15.7	15.8	15.6	—0.1	0.1
Percent Unemployed	6.1	6.1	6.2	.....	...
U.S. Unemployment Rate	...	4.0	4.2	..	..

*Less than 50

NINE YEARS OF MONTANA INDUSTRIAL EMPLOYMENT TOTALS BY MONTHS (in Thousands)

	Jan.	Feb.	March	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Aver.
1956	156.6	154.4	156.3	163.0	169.3	177.4	177.4	179.8	177.2	174.6	170.4	166.7	168.6
1957	156.8	155.0	156.8	161.3	166.0	172.0	174.2	174.2	170.8	167.4	163.2	159.9	164.8
1958	153.1	150.3	150.5	156.4	162.4	167.1	170.2	172.2	170.0	168.8	165.8	162.4	162.4
1959	155.3	153.2	155.9	162.2	167.5	174.0	177.5	179.2	169.9	165.6	161.5	159.4	165.1
1960	152.7	152.5	156.1	163.5	168.4	175.8	176.9	177.7	174.8	171.6	167.5	164.5	166.8
1961	156.9	154.8	156.1	160.2	165.1	173.3	176.0	178.1	176.8	172.4	169.0	166.2	167.1
1962	158.3	158.2	159.6	166.2	172.4	180.1	180.5	181.2	178.6	176.6	175.1	173.5	171.7
1963	163.9	163.0	165.0	170.2	175.1	181.0	182.3	183.8	181.5	179.7	176.6	173.6	174.6
1964	166.2	164.3	165.1	169.1	174.2	182.4	185.5	187.2	184.9	182.2	178.4	175.4	176.2
1965	167.9	167.4	168.9	174.4	179.8	188.7	189.6	192.1	189.9	188.1	185.3	183.6	181.3
1966	173.9	172.6	174.2	180.2	185.4	195.6	198.2	199.2	195.8	191.2	187.6	186.9	186.7
1967	179.9	178.5	180.1	184.6	188.7	199.0	201.4	196.6	195.4	193.8	191.7	189.7	189.9
1968	181.0	181.0*											

* Preliminary Estimate—

Along the Hiring Line— Field Summary for February

in evidence. Labor surplus exists in most occupations.

LIVINGSTON, Big Timber—Generally fair employment trends in most industries prior to spring hiring. Good demand for temporary trade and service workers due to special events. Recruitment of workers underway for Yellowstone Park. Logging, lumbering, and railroad activity on slow side.

MILES CITY, Baker, Ekalaka, Broadus, Jordan, Terry—Increased activity in oil fields mainly responsible for good job upswing in most industries. Industrial job placements at highest level of past 12 years. A prosperous year seen in both the industrial and agricultural sectors.

MISSOULA, Drummond, Arlee, Superior—Area economy shows stable trends in most industry groups. Lumber mills, construction, trade and service came through the winter months with generally better job levels than last year. Downturn in logging will last approximately six weeks or until logging roads firm up. Farm labor demand still not too active.

POLSON—Closure of plywood mill last November had little adverse effect on local economy. Most idled workers went into other lumber related jobs. Good trends evident in most industries including construction, trade, and lumbering.

SHELBY—Good February weather allowed construction, agriculture, and other outdoor work to keep good pace. Non-farm job placements show slight gain from last year. Farm job placements up appreciably from last year.

SIDNEY—Job placements at high levels as area economy continues on solid basis. Building, highway, and bridge construction set for spring hiring. New bank on construction agenda. Some farm labor shortages expected as spring work season begins.

THOMPSON FALLS, Hot Springs—Most industry groups keep stable job trends except logging presently hampered by spring break-up conditions. Lumber mills expected to operate on normal schedules with stock piled logs. Farm labor demand yet to develop for this season.

WOLF POINT, Plentywood, Scobey—Comparison with last year shows construction job gains offsetting some declines in oil field and agriculture. Good agenda of building construction in area. Job completions include two school additions and religious education center. Advance orders for farm help indicate demand may exceed supply by late March.

ESTIMATED EMPLOYMENT IN NON-AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRIES IN MONTANA (1)

(Compiled in co-operation with United States Bureau of Labor Statistics)

INDUSTRY	EMPLOYMENT			Net Change	
	Feb. 1968 (2)	Jan. 1968 (3)	Feb. 1967	Jan. '68 to Feb. '68	Feb. '67 Against Feb. '68
NON-AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRIES	**181,000**	**181,000**	**178,500**	**00**	**2,500**
Manufacturing	**20,400**	**20,400**	**22,600**	**00**	**—2,200**
Durable goods	**12,300**	**12,200**	**14,500**	**100**	**—2,200**
Lumber and timber products	8,200	8,200	8,100	00	100
*Primary metals	1,600	1,600	4,300	00	—2,700
Other (4)	2,500	2,400	2,100	100	400
Nondurable goods	**8,100**	**8,200**	**8,100**	**— 100**	**00**
Food and kindred products	4,500	4,600	4,400	— 100	100
Printing and publishing	1,700	1,600	1,700	100	00
Petroleum refining	1,000	1,000	1,000	00	00
Other (5)	900	1,000	1,000	— 100	— 100
Mining	**3,500**	**3,500**	**7,300**	**00**	**—3,800**
*Metal mining	1,000	1,000	4,800	00	—3,800
Coal, quarrying and nonmetallic	900	900	1,000	00	— 100
Petroleum-natural gas production	1,600	1,600	1,500	00	100
Contract Construction	**8,900**	**8,700**	**7,400**	**200**	**1,500**
Contractors, building construction	3,000	3,000	2,200	00	800
Contractors, other than building	2,600	2,400	2,200	200	400
Contractors, special trade	3,300	3,300	3,000	00	300
Transportation and utilities	**17,300**	**17,400**	**17,100**	**— 100**	**200**
Interstate railroads	6,700	6,800	7,000	— 100	— 300
Transportation except railroads	4,500	4,500	4,100	00	400
Utilities including communication	6,100	6,100	6,000	00	100
Trade	**42,400**	**42,800**	**41,200**	**— 400**	**1,200**
Wholesale trade	8,800	8,700	8,600	100	200
Retail trade	**33,600**	**34,100**	**32,600**	**— 500**	**1,000**
General merchandise and apparel	6,100	6,300	5,900	— 200	200
Food stores	5,400	5,500	5,300	— 100	100
Eating and drinking establishments	8,100	8,000	7,900	100	200
Automotive and filling stations	7,400	7,500	7,000	— 100	400
Retail trade not elsewhere classified	6,600	6,800	6,500	— 200	100
Finance, insurance and real estate	**7,300**	**7,300**	**7,000**	**00**	**300**
Services and miscellaneous	**27,600**	**27,700**	**27,100**	**— 100**	**500**
Hotels, rooming houses, camps, etc.	2,800	2,800	2,900	00	— 100
Personal services	2,100	2,200	2,200	— 100	— 100
Other (6)	22,700	22,700	22,000	00	700
Government	**53,600**	**53,200**	**48,800**	**400**	**4,800**
Federal	11,700	11,900	11,500	— 200	200
State and local	41,900	41,300	37,300	600	4,600
Great Falls Area (Cascade County)	**22,100**	**22,200**	**23,000**	**— 100**	**— 900**
*Manufacturing	2,500	2,500	4,000	00	—1,500
Contract construction	1,500	1,500	1,500	00	00
Transportation and utilities	2,000	2,000	2,100	00	— 100
Trade, wholesale and retail	5,900	6,000	5,700	— 100	200
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	1,400	1,400	1,300	00	100
Services and miscellaneous (7)	3,800	3,800	3,700	00	100
Government	5,000	5,000	4,700	00	300
Billings Area (Yellowstone County)	**26,500**	**26,500**	**25,400**	**00**	**1,100**
Manufacturing	3,000	3,000	3,000	00	00
Contract Construction	1,500	1,500	1,200	00	300
Transportation and Utilities	2,900	2,900	2,800	00	100
Trade, wholesale and retail	8,100	8,100	7,800	00	300
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	1,400	1,400	1,400	00	00
Services and Miscellaneous (7)	4,900	4,900	4,800	00	100
Government	4,700	4,700	4,400	00	300

*Copper Strike Started 7/15/67

(1) Estimates include all full and part-time wage and salary workers who worked or received pay during the pay period ending nearest the 15th of the month. Proprietors, firm members, personnel of the armed forces, domestic servants, and self-employed persons are excluded.

(2) Preliminary estimates based on return from samples of 741 selected Montana establishments.

(3) Figures previously released have been revised on return from 1,120 such establishments.

(4) Includes fabricated metal products, machinery except electrical, furniture, stone and clay products.

(5) Includes apparel, chemicals, and miscellaneous manufacturing products.

(6) Includes commercial trade schools, auto repair services and garages, miscellaneous repair services and hand trades, motion pictures, amusements and recreation, medical and health, law offices and professional services, non-profit membership organizations and business not otherwise classified.

(7) Same as (6) above. Also includes hotels, rooming houses, camps, personal services and mining.

COMPARISON OF BASIC LABOR MARKET ACTIVITIES IN FEBRUARY, 1968 AND FEBRUARY, 1967

Employment Service Office	New Job Applicants				Jobseekers in File				Job Placements								UI Claims*	
	Feb. 1968		Feb. 1967		Feb. 1968		Feb. 1967		Feb. 1968				Feb. 1967				Wk. 3-1	
	Tot.	Vet.	Tot.	Vet.	Tot.	Vet.	Tot.	Vet.	Ind.	Ag.	Tot.	Vet.	Ind.	Ag.	Tot.	Vet.	1968	1967
Anaconda	107	29	186	59	333	113	259	86	23	6	29	5	152	20	172	55	217	143
Billings	562	84	532	162	2,710	966	2,663	849	312	70	382	152	336	66	402	128	1,544	1,666
Bozeman	170	43	190	35	451	126	543	140	109	22	131	28	108	14	122	22	244	296
Butte	260	82	340	104	1,515	496	1,037	303	17	3	20	5	115		115	42	950	460
Cut Bank	46	18	60	18	346	148	445	172	18	1	19	12	9	31	40	19	249	326
Dillon	56	14	42	12	196	69	178	47	16	31	47	27	17	44	61	28	118	105
Glasgow	85	22	42	11	236	63	261	39	35	3	38	11	51	8	59	13	162	183
Glendive	77	24	40	9	230	67	263	44	33	2	35	8	12	10	22	3	131	163
Great Falls	425	84	610	168	1,977	527	2,307	793	169	53	222	57	251	75	326	84	1,081	1,394
Hamilton	49	16	39	9	337	126	295	82	26	7	33	9	11	9	20	6	215	210
Havre	82	19	64	18	243	121	278	82	27	10	37	13	26	15	41	15	204	231
Helena	243	54	175	39	909	293	754	267	60	18	78	27	105	13	118	20	511	551
Kalispell	246	82	208	65	1,078	366	1,159	383	94	7	101	35	89	5	94	27	873	861
Lewistown	37	10	61	12	242	68	237	65	33	35	68	14	43	37	80	23	173	189
Libby	124	48	57	19	795	178	446	152	21		21	10	24		24	3	727	414
Livingston	70	22	66	8	287	87	361	73	46	13	59	26	41	17	58	21	233	265
Miles City	108	26	38	12	283	79	170	59	61	25	86	20	15	9	24	8	152	178
Missoula	526	129	472	136	1,645	567	1,418	469	212	10	222	63	244	13	257	80	728	785
Polson	31	9	104	13	226	86	368	116	19	2	21	8	10	4	14	7	194	239
Shelby	39	7	42	23	184	64	211	90	20	43	63	5	14	8	22	1	125	189
Sidney	75	21	47	8	235	62	121	36	32	6	38	7	22	10	32	7	170	99
Thom. Falls	30	9	26	11	193	67	235	70	18		18	7	10		10	3	152	164
Wolf Point	45	16	32	14	245	91	247	103	13	2	15	6	12	5	17	6	132	158
Billings YOC	168	3	228	7	438	18	587	32	53	1	54	8	79	1	80	6	.....	.....
TOTALS	3,661	871	3,701	972	15,334	4,848	14,843	4,552	1,467	370	1,837	563	1,796	414	2,210	627	9,285	9,269

*Includes 945 claims of the Fed. U.C. Program 680 same a year ago.

AVERAGE HOURS AND EARNINGS IN SELECTED MONTANA INDUSTRIES

(Produced in co-operation with United States Bureau of Labor Statistics)
(Hours and earnings data exclude administrative and salaried personnel)

INDUSTRY	Average Weekly Earnings			Average Weekly Hours			Average Hourly Earnings		
	Feb (1) 1968	Jan. (2) 1968	Feb. 1967	Feb (1) 1968	Jan. (2) 1968	Feb. 1967	Feb (1) 1968	Jan. (2) 1968	Feb. 1967
All Manufacturing	125.39	129.20	117.39	38.7	40.0	39.0	3.24	3.23	3.01
Durable Goods	130.24	130.65	118.70	40.7	40.7	40.1	3.20	3.21	2.96
Primary Metals	*	*	118.10	*	*	39.9	*	*	2.96
Nondurable Goods	119.52	129.23	113.20	36.0	39.4	36.4	3.32	3.28	3.11
Food and Kindred Products	105.67	115.66	99.64	35.7	40.3	36.1	2.96	2.87	2.76
All Mining	119.03	118.91	135.62	36.4	36.7	41.6	3.27	3.24	3.26
Metal Mining	*	*	131.13	*	*	40.1	*	*	3.27
Transportation and Utilities (except Rys.)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Transportation (except railroads)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Utilities and Communications	118.25	118.66	119.69	37.9	38.4	39.5	3.12	3.09	3.03

(1) Preliminary estimates. (2) Figures previously released have been revised on more complete returns.
*Copper Strike Began 7/15/67

UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION COMMISSION OF MONTANA

UCC BUILDING
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HELENA, MONTANA 59601

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